

U. S. Needs Foreign Metals for Many Alloys in Industry

Some Supplies Imported In World War Now Are Produced in America

This is the seventh of a series of articles discussing "strategic" and "critical" materials required by American industry—especially in manufacture of war supplies.

By OLIVER MCKEE.

During the 22 years that have passed since the end of the World War, the strategic material position of the United States has undergone many changes. The manufacture of synthetic material from atmospheric nitrogen, for example, has made us less dependent on the importation of nitrates from Chile, and we now produce a large part of the potash required by American industry. As a result of the establishment of a smelter at Leadville, Tex., equipped to supply large amounts of antimony derived from Mexican ores, we are no longer dependent on imports of antimony from Asia. The production of pyrites in the United States has increased greatly during the last two decades, and the domestic sulphur industry also has expanded enormously. Improved technology has made possible the utilization and exploitation of many low-grade deposits of strategic minerals.

There are many materials, however, for which we are still largely dependent on foreign sources of supply. The great increase in the use of alloys in industry has created a larger demand for such minerals as manganese, nickel, chrome and aluminum. Under the international conditions that now prevail there is no certainty that the United States will continue to have access to foreign sources of supply for the materials essential to national defense and industry. American ships are barred from combat zones and if the war extends to the Dutch East Indies and the Malay Islands, supplies of such important commodities as tin and rubber may be cut off.

Warning Given Two Years Ago.

"The experience of all nations in the Great War and of those nations now engaged in lesser wars, proves again what has been proven so many times before, that certain metals and minerals are vital to war requirements," the Interior Department warned in a report submitted to Chairman Sheppard of the Senate Military Affairs Committee two years ago. "Possession of these in adequate quantities means victory. Lack of them means defeat. Behind the scenes in world diplomacy bitter struggles for their control are taking place."

Last year, in recognition of their importance in industrial preparedness, Congress authorized the purchase of stocks of strategic materials by the Procurement Division of the Treasury. Purchases under this authorization so far have included tungsten ore, quartz crystals, optical glass, manila fiber, chromium ore, tin, manganese, quinine and sulphate. Under the emergency national defense program purchases will be stepped up during the coming year.

As part of the same legislation, Congress directed the Bureau of Mines and the Geological Survey to investigate domestic deposits of minerals designated as strategic and to determine whether, by scientific treatment and exploitation, such deposits could provide supplies of minerals and metals needed by the United States in an emergency, even at higher than the usual cost.

Seven Materials Investigated.

Investigations now under way are chiefly concerned with seven strategic minerals—antimony, chromium, ferro grade manganese, mercury, tin and tungsten. Later, it is planned to investigate domestic deposits of other metals and minerals of less strategic importance.

Earlier surveys of domestic reserves have been largely confined to ores that are commercial, judged by present standards, and existing metallurgical practices. Industry could hardly be expected to explore deposits of subcommercial grade. With the advance in technology and the development of new processes, Federal experts believe that these marginal deposits can be used in an emergency to supplement our supplies of strategic minerals and lessen our dependence on imports from foreign countries.

"The Bureau of Mines has no misapprehension that its investigations are likely to disclose large domestic deposits of high grade strategic ores, but it is hopeful that low grade deposits will be shown to exist in this country containing important quantities of strategic metals that could be utilized in an emergency provided methods for their utilization had been worked out in advance," Charles F. Jack-

son, chief engineer of the Mining Division, Bureau of Mines, pointed out in a recent article in the Engineering and Mining Journal. "It is clearly a function of government, rather than of private industry to investigate such deposits in the national interest, and such investigations in no sense compete with private enterprise."

New Section Established. The Mining Division is directing the exploratory operations, and two new sections have been established.

One, the strategic mineral examination section, analyzes the most promising deposits, and the second, the strategic minerals projects section, explores the sample deposits selected for a more detailed examination. A dozen or so project areas are now being surveyed. On March 28, Dr. Ernst Berl, research professor at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, read a paper before the Army Industrial College on "The Economic Situation in Central Europe." In this paper he

listed about 25 metals and other materials as factors determining national self-sufficiency. Each item was weighted according to its importance as an element in national self-sufficiency. Coal, for example, was given a relative weight of 16, iron 12, platinum 1 and petroleum 10.

Using this yardstick, Dr. Berl found that the United States had a score of 73.3 per cent, out of a possible 100, and Russia 76.3. He rated other countries as follows: The

United Kingdom, 29.8; France, 33.1; Germany, 34; Italy, 37.3 and Japan, 36.

Montgomery Red Cross Appeals for Relief Fund

The Montgomery County (Md.) Red Cross today appealed for relief funds to ease suffering in war areas of Europe and for volunteers to make surgical dressings for shipment abroad. Workers of the county chapter

are gathering each Wednesday and Thursday from 9:30 to 12:30 o'clock at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Recreation Center, Norwood drive, Bethesda, to make the surgical dressings. American Red Cross headquarters has issued a call for immediate shipment of bandages as fast as they are made. All cash donated will form part of the \$10,000,000 relief fund the American Red Cross is raising.

Egypt is reforesting along the Nile.

Maryland's Relief Bill Drops \$36,984 in Month

By the Associated Press. BALTIMORE, May 24.—Maryland's relief bill last month was \$774,933, a decrease of \$36,984 from the previous month. Expenditures for direct relief in April totaled \$199,937, a reduction of more than 13 per cent, compared with March, Welfare Director J. Milton Patterson reported. All but four counties showed de-

creases in relief expenditures. The exceptions were Allegany, Calvert, Dorchester and Montgomery Counties. Montgomery's costs were up 10 per cent, as compared with March.

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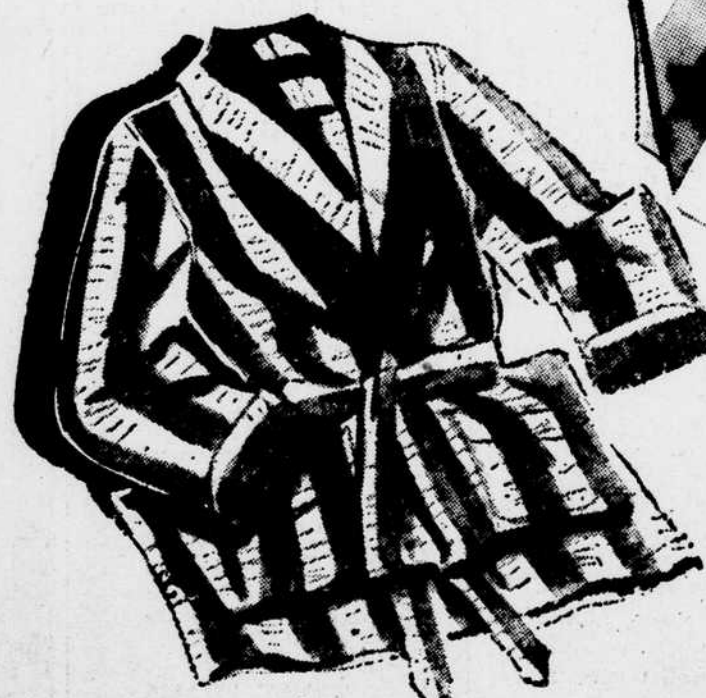
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